

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3625

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

USMISSION NATO

DIA WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 4385

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINT, PO

SUBJ: POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS: STILL NO NEW GOVERNMENT

SUMMARY: PRESIDENT COSTA GOMES SAID MEMBERS OF NEW GOVERNMENT HAVE BEEN SELECTED AND FORMAL ANNOUNCEMENT OF NAMES CAN BE EXPECTED AUGUST 2. EMBASSY SOURCES STATE GENERAL OTELO SARAIVA DE CARVALHO IS HOLDING OUT FOR CO-EQUAL STATUS WITH PRIME MINISTER GONCALVES AS WELL AS VOICE IN NAMING OF MEMBERS OF NEW GOVERNMENT. OTELO ON JULY 31 INTERVENED IN INTERNAL DISPUTE IN AMADORA COMMANDO REGIMENT IN FAVOR OF LEFTISTS. OTELO IS NOW RECONSIDERING HIS ACTION, WHICH HAS SERIOUS IMPLICATIONS FOR ALREADY SHAKY AFM UNITY. EMBASSY SOURCES SAY THAT AFM MODERATES' EFFORT TO OUST GONCALVES CONTINUES, WITH THE HOPE BEING THAT HE WILL FAIL TO FORM A GOVERNMENT AND BECOME VULNERABLE TO A REPLACEMENT MOVE. PS AND PPD CONTINUE TO CRITICIZE NEW GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE; LEADER OF LEFTIST UDP AGREES NEW GOVERNMENT

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WILL NOT LAST. MORE VIOLENCE AGAINST THE LEFT IN AVEIRO

AND ALENTEJO REGIONS. END SUMMARY

1. NEW GOVERNMENT: ON HIS DEPARTURE FOR HELSINKI JULY 31, PRESIDENT COSTA GOMES STATED THAT MEMBERS OF NEW GOVERNMENT HAD BEEN SELECTED; ON ARRIVAL THERE HE ADDED THAT NAMES WOULD BE ANNOUNCED AUGUST 2. CONTRARY TO PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT, OTHER SOURCES HAVE TOLD US THAT GENERAL OTELO SARAIVA DE CARVALHO IS NOT HAPPY WITH ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE NEW GOVERNMENT. ACCORDING TO THESE SOURCES, OTELO IS UNWILLING TO ACCEPT A VICE PRIME MINISTER POSITION UNDER PRIME MINISTER VASCO GONCALVES; OTELO IS HOLDING OUT FOR EQUAL STATUS WITH GONCALVES UNDER THE PRESIDENT. OTELO ALSO WANTS A VOICE IN SELECTION OF MEMBERS OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT. OTELO AND GONCALVES MET LATE INTO THE NIGHT JULY 31, PRESUMABLY TO DISCUSS THESE AND OTHER MATTERS.

2. SOME EMBASSY SOURCES HAVE REPORTED THAT AFM MODERATES ARE PURSUING A PLAN TO GET RID OF GONCALVES WHEN HE PROVES UNABLE TO FORM A NEW GOVERNMENT. THE MODERATES HAVE BEEN WORKING BEHIND THE SCENES TO HINDER THE PRIME MINISTER'S EFFORTS, AND THERE ARE SOME INDICATIONS THAT THE LAST MINUTE PULL-OUT OF THE EX-MES GROUP WAS IN RESPONSE TO PRESSURE FROM THE MODERATES. THE SAME SOURCES SAY THAT PRESIDENT COSTA GOMES IS COOPERATING WITH THE MOVE TO OUST THE PM.

3. TROUBLE AT COMMANDO REGIMENT: COPCON COMMANDER OTELO SARAIVA DE CARVALHO ON JULY 31 ANNOUNCED SUMMARY TRANSFER OF NINE OFFICERS, INCLUDING UNIT COMMANDER COL. NEVES, AND FOUR SERGEANTS FROM THE AMADORA COMMANDO REGIMENT ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF LISBON. OTELO HAD GONE TO UNIT AFTER HEARING OF INTERNAL DIFFERENCES WITHIN THE REGIMENT. QUESTION OF REGIMENT'S ROLE IN PROMOTING DIRECT LINKS WITH PEOPLE HAD LED TO EFFORT TO PURGE SEVERAL LEFTISTS, WHO WERE SOON SUPPORTED BY LEFTIST WORKERS FROM NEARBY SOREFAME METALWORKS. IN ADDITION TO ANNOUNCING TRANSFER OF UNIT PERSONNEL, COPCON STATEMENT REAFFIRMED NECESSITY OF CLOSE LINKS BETWEEN AFM AND PEOPLE AND NEED FOR MILITARY UNITS TO PARTICIPATE ACTIVELY IN THIS PROCESS. LATER REPORTS INDICATE COPCON MAY BE HAVING SECOND THOUGHTS ABOUT TRANSFERS. HIGH-LEVEL DISCUSSIONS INVOLVING GENERAL OTELO, COL. NEVES, AND OTHERS ARE CONTINUING.

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4. PARTY ACTIVITIES: POLITICAL PARTIES AND THEIR LEADERS ARE INCREASING THE TEMPO OF THEIR ACTIVITIES.

--SOARES REPEATED FAMILIAR THEMES BEFORE SEVERAL THOUSNAD PERSONS AT PS RALLY IN SANTAREM PRIOR TO HIS DEPARTURE TO STOCKHOLM FOR MEETING WITH EUROPEAN SOCIALIST LEADERS. IN PREDEPARTURE INTERVIEW, SOARES SAID HE LOOED FORWARD TO MEETING WITH OTELO FOLLOWING HIS RETURN.

--PPD LEADER GUERREIRO, IN PARIS, SAID NEW GOVERNMENT BEING FORMED BY GONCALVES WOULD BE UNREPRESENTATIVE AND WOULD NOT LAST LONG. GUERREIRO ADDED THAT PPD PLANNED TO LAUNCH CAMPAIGN ON NATIONAL SCALE TO DENOUNCE ACTIVITIES OF AFM, WHICH NO LONGER TOOK INTO CONSIDERATION WILL OF THE PEOPLE.

--UDP LEADER AMERICO DUARTE, SPEAKING IN CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY JULY 31, OPINED THAT INTERNAL CONTRADICTIONS WOULD SOON BRING DOWN NEW GOVERNMENT.

5. VIOLENCE: MORE VIOLENCE AGAINST LEFT WAS REPORTED JULY 31 IN SAN JOAO DA MEDEIRA (BETWEEN OPORTO AND AVEIRO). OFFICES OF MDP/CDE AND PCP WERE SACKED AND CONTENTS BURNED. PCP REGIONAL DIRECTORATE FOR ALENTEJO AND ALGARVE ISSUED COMMUNIQUE JULY 31 CONDEMNING THE "WAVE OF COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY ATTACKS" AGAINST PCP AND OTHER PROGRESSIVE FORCES, WHICH IT SAID WERE CENTRALLY DIRECTED. STATEMENT LISTED ALMOST DOZEN SEPARATE INCIDENTS IN PAST FEW WEEKS, SOME OF WHICH NOT PREVIOUSLY REPORTED. STATEMENT ANNOUNCED PCP UNITY DEMONSTRATIONS IN EVORA AUGUST2.

6. COMMENT: HOW COMMANDOS' CASE IS FINALLY RESOLVED WILL HAVE STRONG IMPACT ON INCREASINGLY SHAKEY AFM COHESION. IF OTELO'S INTERVENTION ON BEHALF OF LEFTISTS -- WHICH BYPASSES NORMAL CHAIN OF COMMAND -- IS ALLOWED TO STAND, ALREADY WEAK MILITARY DISCIPLINE WILL BE FURTHER UNDERMINED. DISCIPLINE HAS BECOME A DIVISIVE ISSUE WITHIN AFM; IT WAS PRINCIPAL

AGENDA ITEM AT THE RECENT AFM ARMY ASSEMBLY. GENERAL CARVALHO'S POST-CUBA COMMENTS ON THE SUBJECT (POLITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS COMES FIRST, DISCIPLINE WILL FOLLOW NATURALLY) PLUS COPCON'S INITIAL RESPONSE IN THIS INSTANCE, PLACE OTELO AT ODDS WITH MORE ORTHODOX VIEWS OF ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF FABIAO AND OTHERS WITHIN AFM LEADERSHIP. THIS IS PRECISELY CONFIDENTIAL

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THE TYPE OF ISSUE WHICH COULD SHATTER FACADE OF UNITY WITHIN AFM LEADERSHIP.

7. OTELO'S APPARENT UNHAPPINESS AT BEING GIVEN ANYTHING LESS THAN CO-EQUAL TREATMENT WITH PRIME MINISTER GONCALVES IS TRUE TO FORM. HIS ELEVENTH-HOUR INVOLVEMENT IN THE SELECTION OF A NEW GOVERNMENT COULD DELAY THE PROCESS STILL FURTHER, PLACE MORE PRESSURE ON GONCALVES, AND PERHAPS HELP PAVE THE WAY FOR THE MODERATES CONTINUING EFFORT TO OUST THE PM.
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